



**WESSEX  
COMMUNITY  
ASSETS**

## Wessex Community Housing Hub

### Community Housing Adviser

## Job Description and Person Specification

### Role

Wessex Community Housing Hub is managed by Wessex Community Assets (WCA). WCA is part of the Wessex Reinvestment Trust group which was established as a Community Development Finance Institution in 2004 by social entrepreneurs in Somerset, Dorset and Devon. WCA provides start-to-finish support for community-led housing projects, generally recognised as one of the leading programmes of community-led housing projects in England.

Wessex Community Housing Hub is working to develop a wider register of technical advisors capable of providing support to self-build, co-op, co-housing and stand-alone community land trust projects. We are currently developing our service so that we can advise on and support not-for-profit, democratic housing models that are affordable in perpetuity and self-managed for the benefit of the community. We are interested in how concepts such as co-housing, co-operatives and empty property refurbishment can combine with innovations such as non-permanent housing in converted containers for people in crisis, modern off-site construction and developments in renewable energy generation.

Wessex Community Housing Hub is seeking an experienced Community Housing Adviser to join our small team of associates to provide technical support and project management to communities wishing to lead their own housing projects. The successful candidate will feel comfortable working autonomously amongst the communities that Wessex Community Housing Hub supports. The role will also centre around engagement with local authorities to promote community-led housing and encourage and foster the development of supportive policies. The role would be attractive to someone interested in making a real difference to communities while working innovatively.

## Position Details

<b>Title</b>	Community Housing Adviser
<b>Status</b>	Employed
<b>Contracted to</b>	Wessex Community Housing Hub
<b>Lead organisation</b>	Wessex Community Assets
<b>Operational Area</b>	Somerset and Dorset
<b>Hours of Work</b>	Daytime and evenings as necessary
<b>Days/week</b>	4 days a week
<b>Salary</b>	£27,000 per annum pro rata plus travel, pension & contribution to costs of home working.
<b>Contract Duration</b>	To 31 March 2021 (fixed term contract with potential to be renewed if funding permits)
<b>Location</b>	Home based with regular travel throughout Dorset and Somerset for meetings (use of own transport required)

## Key Responsibilities

- **Community engagement** – Acting as a first point of contact for communities wishing to explore community led housing. Supporting community engagement and helping build community interest/support in community led housing schemes, including leading as many public meetings as necessary. Collaborating and communicating with Parish Councils, local authorities, housing authorities, community groups and other organisations with an interest in community led housing.
- **Helping to clarify purpose & intention** - Facilitating the community group's vision for the project, considering an appropriate model of community-led affordable housing, exploring the implications for capital and revenue funding etc.
- **Support around legal structure & governance:** Facilitating a process which allows the group to make an informed decision about the most appropriate legal structure for their needs, register as a corporate entity (e.g. CBS) and put in place governance arrangements.
- **Initial project management support** - Administering project team meetings; drafting agendas, chairing and taking minutes as required until the community group feels confident enough to take these on. Maintaining an up to date project plan which forecasts when all elements of a project will take place.
- **Site identification and land acquisition** - Advising on the site selection process and on the heads of terms between the community group and the landowner. Advising on the content and structure of a public meeting designed to win the support of the wider community for a recommended site. Recommending solicitors based on our experience of other projects. Providing template forms of option agreement and lease as necessary.
- **Planning issues** - Supporting the community group in deciding the number, type, tenure and design principles of the proposed housing and playing a full part in promulgation of the planning application. Facilitating discussions between the community, housing authority (if involved) and local authority about the wording of the S 106 agreement (where applicable) and ensuring that the community's preferences are incorporated as fully as possible.
- **Development risks** – Ensuring that the party taking the development risk understands the implications should any such risks materialise.
- **Training** - Organising training sessions in response to the community group's emerging needs. These include sessions on (a) accounting, (b) governance, and (c) allocations. Arranging peer-learning visits to other communities.
- **Problem Solving** - Helping to keep the project on track by problem solving as and when snags arise; ranging from the availability of grant for rented to occasional reductions in the capacity of volunteers.
- **Access to Funds** – Advising community-led housing groups regarding possible sources of funding at each stage of the project; assisting with drafting funding bids.
- **Influencing policy** – Working with others in the community-led affordable housing sector to maximise resources and policy support for community-led housing projects, including relationships with local authorities, MPs, civil servants and special advisers.
- **Performance reporting** – To Wessex Community Housing Hub, Wessex Community Assets, partner local authorities as required.

## Person Specification - Selection Criteria

Attributes	Relevant Criteria	Identification Method	Essential/Desirable
Skills & Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent interpersonal, verbal and written communication skills</li> <li>• Good administrative, IT and organisational skills</li> <li>• Ability to communicate complex technical information clearly and concisely, adapting to a wide range of audiences</li> <li>• Self-motivated and well-organised with the ability to work autonomously and effectively manage workloads</li> <li>• Strong influencing and negotiation skills</li> <li>• Ability to work with colleagues in an adaptable and co-operative manner</li> <li>• Ability to develop strategies, financial plans and project timelines</li> <li>• Ability to listen and assimilate information to arrive at workable solutions</li> <li>• Effective problem-solving skills</li> <li>• Ability to gain the trust and confidence of community groups to build strong and productive working relationships</li> <li>• Ability to lead and present complex information in community presentations</li> <li>• A personal interest in Wessex Community Housing Hub's vision, mission and values</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>P/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>P</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>R/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>R/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>R/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>R/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>P/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p>
General & Specialist Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An understanding of current policies and issues related to housing in communities, including planning and community development</li> <li>• An understanding of community led housing models</li> <li>• An understanding of appropriate legal structures for community led housing projects</li> <li>• Local knowledge of Dorset and Somerset geography and demographics</li> <li>• Experience of organising and facilitating consultations and events</li> <li>• Experience of community engagement and development</li> <li>• Experience of business planning and of establishing community groups</li> <li>• Experience of sourcing revenue and capital grants</li> <li>• Experience of housing development</li> <li>• Experience of project management</li> <li>• Experience of housing policy, strategy or management</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A/I</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>D</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>D</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>D</b></p>
Education & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant degree e.g. Planning, Housing, Geography, Community Development or Surveying, or equivalent experience</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>C/R</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>E</b></p>

Relevant Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive demonstrable experience of project managing community led housing projects</li> </ul>	<b>A/I</b>	<b>D</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of reporting to executive teams or boards</li> </ul>	<b>A/I</b>	<b>E</b>
Special Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of community led housing projects</li> </ul>	<b>A/I</b>	<b>D</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A working knowledge of rural housing policy</li> </ul>	<b>A/I</b>	<b>D</b>

<b>Key</b>	<b>Identification Method</b>
<b>A</b>	Application Form
<b>I</b>	Interview
<b>C</b>	Copy of Certificates
<b>P</b>	Presentation
<b>R</b>	Reference